



The City of Ironton

SAM CRAMBLIT, Mayor

Ironton City Center • 301 S. 3rd St. • P.O. Box 704 • Ironton, OH 45638

Phone: (740) 532-3833 • Fax: (740) 532-7556

Email: irontonmayor@ironton-ohio.com

Chair Roemer, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Troy, and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Samuel Cramblit, and I serve as Mayor of the City of Ironton in Lawrence County. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of our community to express our strong opposition to House Bill 335, the "Property Tax Relief Now Act."

While we appreciate the legislature's desire to respond to property tax concerns across Ohio, we believe HB 335 represents a significant overreach into local governance and would cause irreparable harm to municipalities across the state.

One of our greatest concerns is the proposed elimination of unvoted inside millage for local governments, including municipalities. This millage has long served as a stable, voter-independent revenue source for cities and villages, supporting essential services such as:

- Police and fire protection,
- Street maintenance and snow removal, and
- Mandatory contributions to OP&F

For Ironton, the loss of inside millage would result in a reduction of approximately \$510,000 in annual funding in a community of approximately 10,000 residents with a small percentage that still pay income tax.

HB 335 would also grant county budget commissions new authority to review and limit local property tax rates and expenditures, even allowing them to reduce levies based on carryover balances. This proposal would strip local governments of essential fiscal autonomy and allow distant administrative bodies to override local budget decisions—even decisions made by voters through approved levies. For Ironton, we risk an additional \$365,000 in annual revenue from renewal levies that support critical infrastructure and quality of life initiatives such as:

- A Mandatory Flood Levee system that is regulated by the US Army Corp of engineers in order to keep our city safe from the dangerous flooding that occurs along the Ohio River, and
- Parks and Recreation operations and maintenance

Municipalities have long been responsible stewards of public funds. We plan our budgets conservatively, prioritize public safety and infrastructure, and seek voter approval when needed. In reality, HB 335 removes tools we rely on to meet growing service demands and will destabilize community services, especially in municipalities with limited tax bases or voter capacity for frequent levies.

If the General Assembly wishes to pursue comprehensive property tax reform, we urge lawmakers to do so in collaboration with local governments. Real reform must:

- Preserve voter-approved and historically grounded revenue streams, and
- Offer replacement revenues where existing ones are removed.

On behalf of the City of Ironton, I respectfully urge this committee to reject HB 335. Property tax relief should not come at the expense of local services and governance. Instead, let's work together to find balanced, sustainable solutions that benefit taxpayers without compromising the capacity of local governments to serve their communities.

Finally, I would like to express our support for a comprehensive tax reform which involves the reduction and/or elimination of municipal property and income tax that may be replaced by a local sales tax as an alternative. For a city like Ironton that is part of a metro area of approximately 300,000 plus with Kentucky and West Virginia, it would be of greater benefit to our city as a whole to fund our community on what is spent vs. what is earned within the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions or provide further information upon request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Cramblit". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Samuel Cramblit
Mayor
City of Ironton